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Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of )

Revision of the Commission's Rules )  
to Ensure Compatibility with E9-1-1 )  
Emergency Calling Systems )

CC Docket No. 94-102

COMMENTS OF THE  
NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBER ASSOCIATION

The National Emergency Number Association ("NENA") hereby responds to the Commission's invitation to comment on *ex parte* presentations concerning several technical issues in the wireless E9-1-1 compatibility segment of the captioned proceeding.<sup>1</sup> As NENA understands the genesis of the presentations, they arise from one or more visits in early June by a group of companies and organizations calling themselves the "Wireless E9-1-1 Coalition," whose members include the Personal Communications Industry Association ("PCIA"), BellSouth, Ericsson, Motorola, Nortel, Omnipoint, Primeco, Siemens and Sprint Spectrum.

Among the topics of the Coalition visits was "routing capabilities," particularly for the Personal Communications Services ("PCS"). The Coalition sought to demonstrate that the "PSAP option" feature<sup>2</sup> of the

<sup>1</sup> Public Notice, DA 97-1502, July 16, 1997, 62 Fed.Reg. 38951, July 21, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> 47 C.F.R. §20.18(b) (1996), requiring covered wireless licensees to "process all wireless 911 calls which do not transmit a Code Identification where requested by the administrator of the designated Public Safety Answering Point [PSAP]. . ." Thus, a PSAP has the choice of not receiving, by failing to request delivery of, so-called non-Code calls to 9-1-1.

Commission's year-old rules on wireless access is presently unachievable for technical reasons. Based on the information presented by the Coalition in June, the FCC formulated a series of questions and asked for responses from GTE Wireless ("GTE") and the Ad Hoc Alliance for Public Access to 9-1-1 ("Alliance") as well as the Coalition.

NENA would be better prepared to comment on the technical issues raised if the Coalition had carried out the intention expressed to the FCC in its early June visits:

The Coalition plans on addressing this issue with the public safety community and will present a consensus recommendation to the FCC.

(*Ex parte* presentation, June 4, 1996, page 8) To our knowledge, none of the national public safety organizations was advised of the Coalition's concerns in June and no such overtures have occurred in July. NENA first learned of the questions about routing capabilities from the FCC. NENA's offer to make time for discussion available to the Coalition at its national convention June 15-19 in Baltimore was not taken up.

NENA is dismayed, and the FCC has reason to be disappointed, that these questions arise so belatedly, nearly a year since the initial Report and Order promulgated Section 20.18 of the Rules. Apart from the specific answers to the technical inquiries, we would appreciate hearing from the Coalition why it took so long -- until two months short of the October 1st deadline for basic access -- to deliver the descriptions and explanations on which comment is now sought.

**Background.** NENA was a party to the Consensus with CTIA and allied public safety groups that recommended forwarding to PSAPs of 9-1-1 calls only from phones which had been "service-initialized," or associated

with a subscriber of a wireless carrier.<sup>3</sup> Our principal reason for recommending such a limitation was to assure that 9-1-1 callers could be called back in the event their communications were interrupted for some reason other than switching off the mobile handset. NENA believes this callback capability is crucial to the safety of the caller and the successful performance of the PSAP. Secondly, the capability tends to deter prank or fraudulent calls from persons not wishing to be identified or traced.

Partly at the urging of the Alliance, the Commission determined to give PSAPs the choice of taking only service-initialized calls or asking that all calls be forwarded, whether or not the phone is Code-Identified. In the contemporaneous Further Notice in the Docket, the Commission asked whether this local option should be placed by a general requirement that 9-1-1 calls be accepted from all wireless phones, Code or non-Code. (§149)

In commenting on both the Further Notice and numerous petitions for reconsideration of the Report and Order, NENA and allied public safety organizations supported local PSAP choice as to whether to take non-Code calls. In NENA's case, this did not signify any reduced importance for callback capability, but simply a determination that member PSAPs were capable of weighing that factor in the balance. At the same time, we noted Alliance's claims that non-Code phones could be called back under certain conditions.

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<sup>3</sup> Report and Order, §§ 22-23. Service initialization achieves, in the Commission's terms, Code Identification, defined as a mobile Identification Number (MIN) or its equivalent. The MIN is "a 34-bit number that is a digital representation of the 10-digit directory telephone number assigned to a mobile station." 47 C.F.R. §20.3.

*Wireless carriers should address Alliance's claims that switch assignment of a "pseudo MIN" is a "trivial exercise."*

The Alliance continues to urge the forwarding of all calls to 9-1-1 on the basis of assertedly unchallenged engineering statements:

[T]he software necessary to assign a temporary callback telephone number (pseudo MIN) to any handset is already resident in the cell switches. The cellular industry has used pseudo MINs for callbacks to roaming handsets for many years. Passing this temporary local callback number to PSAPs for all 911 callers is a trivial exercise.

(Alliance Answer No. 5, page 2) The responses of GTE and the Coalition do not join issue directly on this point. GTE's reference to a "roam access port" number echoes Alliance's reference to the use of pseudo MINs for roamer callback, but that number sounds transitory in GTE's further explanation: "wait for the tone to enter the actual 10-digit MIN of the original caller." The Coalition's answers appear to relate to indirect identification through database lookup (as distinguished from switch assignment) but most often conclude that lookup is defeated without an "associated subscription."

(Responses to No. 5 for GSM and iDEN technologies)

NENA is aware of the use of a Temporary Local Directory Number ("TLDN") sometimes established in lieu of a roamer's MIN. However, the TLDN assignment, to our knowledge, does not last beyond the end of the call and therefore cannot be used for callback. Accordingly, our question for the Alliance and the industry commenters would be: How long after the call's completion would a pseudo MIN or a roam access port number last?<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> GTE does not believe a 7-digit ANI will work, Alliance says it will. (Responses to No. 10) Who is correct?

NENA recognizes that, even if the Alliance solution proves feasible, callback will not always be possible:

- If the caller moves from one carrier's area to another's;
- If the caller enters a no-service area;
- If the handset is turned off;
- If the SIM card is removed from a GSM handset; or
- If the caller is an international roamer whose home system does not support international forwarding.

Nevertheless, if the Commission is to make a reasoned decision on whether to stick with PSAP option or to insist on forwarding of all calls, there ought to be some technical consensus on the viability of callback in the unexceptional case. Until that consensus is demonstrated, NENA as an organization continues to support service initialization, while recognizing that individual PSAPs are capable of deciding for themselves on acceptance of non-service-initialized calls to 9-1-1.

*If callback is readily achieved, the  
need for PSAP choice disappears.*

The FCC's Question No. 8 to the Coalition, the Alliance and GTE attempts to probe the viability of the current rule allowing PSAPs to choose whether to accept non-Code calls. The Alliance's answer is that nothing in the regulations requires a MIN to be resident in the caller's handset. If instead, as the Alliance proposes, a callback number can be created in the switch to be used distinctively for an individual call, then the public safety organizations' principal reason for supporting service initialization is satisfied even for calls from non-initialized phones.

Again, the issue is not truly joined. GTE names at least one manufacturer working timely on a means for PSAPs to choose receipt of

calls from "non-MIN mobiles." Of the other two switch-makers named by GTE, one does not expect to meet the FCC deadline and the other's plans are unknown. From the Alliance's perspective, if we understand its answers, the necessary capability -- creation of per-call pseudo MINs -- is already available in existing switches, making the timing of the innovations discussed by GTE immaterial.

If we understand the Coalition's answers to No. 8, the problem lies with the FCC's definition of Code-Identified. Calls to 9-1-1 can be forwarded without reference to Code status because they are not subjected to any kind of validation. It is only when Code status must be checked -- presumably because a PSAP declined to request non-Code calls -- that problems arise.

NENA must keep its focus on callback capability. If switch assignment of temporary callback numbers works for the purpose on a per-call basis, fine. If that does not work, and callback success for now depends on service initialization of the calling phone, then service initialization ought to replace Code Identification in Sections 20.3 and 20.18.

Respectfully submitted,

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## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a copy of the foregoing COMMENTS OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBER ASSOCIATION has been served via first class mail, postage pre-paid, to the following on the 28th day of July, 1997:

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